

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Vocabulary: Lesson 16

from "Tracks" by Louise Erdrich

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1. **addled** (*adj.*)- confused
  2. **barrel** (*v.*)- to move fast, often without paying attention to surroundings
  3. **fix** (*v.*)- to look at steadily; to focus
  4. **haunch** (*n.*)- part of the body including the hip, rump, and thigh; hind quarter
  5. **midwife** (*n.*)- a person trained to help women with childbirth
  6. **nuisance** (*n.*)- one that is annoying, unpleasant, or obnoxious; a pest
  7. **piston** (*n.*)- sliding piece inside the cylinder of an engine creating power
  8. **point-blank** (*adv.*)- at close range; close up
  9. **precaution** (*n.*)- an action taken to prevent unwanted things from happening; a safeguard
  10. **trifle** (*n.*)- a thing of little value or consequence; a trivial matter

### Exercise 2: Using Vocabulary in Context

Select **five** weekly vocabulary words to use in your own sentences. You must utilize each sentence pattern at least once (simple, complex, compound, compound-complex).

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

# LESSON 16

from **Tracks** (fiction)  
by Louise Erdrich

I sat quietly after [Eli] was gone, and sampled the food that he had refused. I drew close to the fire, settled my back against the split logs, and was just about to have a second helping when the drunk bear rambled past. She sniffed the ground, rolled over in an odor that pleased her, drew up and sat, **addled**, on her **haunches** like a dog. I jumped straight onto the top of the woodpile, I don't know how, since my limbs were so stiff from the wet cold. I crouched, yelled at the house, screamed for the gun, but only attracted the bear. She dragged herself over, gave a drawn-out whine, a cough, and **fixed** me with a long, patient stare.

Margaret flung the door open. "Shoot it, you old fool," she hollered. But I was empty-handed. Margaret was irritated with this **trifle**, put out that I had not obeyed her, anxious to get rid of the **nuisance** and go back to Fleur. She marched straight toward us. Her face was pinched with exhaustion, her pace furious. Her arms moved like **pistons** and she came so fast that she and the bear were face to face before she realized that she had nothing with which to attack. She was sensible, Margaret Kashpaw, and turned straight around. Fleur kept her gun above the flour cupboard in a rack of antlers, but Margaret never reached it. The bear followed, heeling her like a puppy, and at the

door to the house, when Margaret turned, arms spread to bar the way, it swatted her aside with one sharp dreamy blow. Then it ambled in and reared on its hind legs.

I am a man, so I don't know exactly what happened when the bear came into the birth house, but they talk among themselves, the women, and sometimes they forget I'm listening. So I know that when Fleur saw the bear in the house she was filled with such fear and power that she raised herself on the mound of blankets and gave birth. Then the **midwife** took down the gun and shot **point-blank**, filling the bear's heart. She says so, anyway. But Margaret says that the lead only gave the bear strength, and I'll support that. For I heard the gun go off and then saw the creature whirl and roar from the house. It **barreled** past me, crashed through the brush into the woods, and was not seen after. It left no trail, either, so it could have been a spirit bear. I don't know. I was still on the woodpile.

I took the **precaution** of finishing my meal there. From what I overheard later, they were sure Fleur was dead, she was so cold and still after giving birth. But then the baby cried. That I heard with my own ears. At that sound, they say, Fleur opened her eyes and breathed. That was when the women went to work and saved her. . . .

## Exercise 1: Context Clues

Read the selection, paying special attention to the words in dark type. These are the Master Words you will study in this lesson. As you read, look for context clues in the sentences and paragraphs around each Master Word. Circle any words and phrases that give clues to the meaning of the Master Words.

Master Words				
Place a check by words you feel you know; underline words you don't know.				
addled	fix	midwife	piston	precaution
barrel	haunch	nuisance	point-blank	trifle

### • • Exercise 3: Using Words in Context

True or False: Write **T** on the line if the statement using the Master Word is true; write **F** if the statement is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. If you **fix** your eyes on the sun, your vision could become blurry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. A sniper shooting at **point-blank** range is miles from the target.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Any married woman of forty is a **midwife**.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Children who **barrel** through the house will be very hard to hear.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. A person may become **addled** if he or she is hit on the head.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Ants can be a **nuisance** at a picnic.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. A **piston** is a moving piece.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. A dog sitting on its **haunches** is probably stretched out in sleep.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Life jackets are kept on boats as a **precaution**.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. A **trifle** is usually too important to ignore.

### • • Exercise 4: Sentence Completion

From the Master Words, choose the appropriate word for the blank in each of the following sentences. Write the word in the space provided at the right.

1. Some customers ...?... through the store, ignoring other shoppers. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The dog gnawed on a large ...?... of beef from the butcher shop. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The ...?... helped in the delivery of the baby. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Her brother was (a, an) ...?..., interrupting her calls and ruining her plans. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Although he was unhurt, he seemed ...?... and turned in the wrong direction. \_\_\_\_\_
6. The car's engine worked perfectly, each ...?... moving smoothly. \_\_\_\_\_
7. The acrobat had to learn to ...?... her eyes on the moving trapeze. \_\_\_\_\_
8. There is a slim chance of rain, but I will take an umbrella as (a, an) ...?... . \_\_\_\_\_
9. Standing close to the target, she shot at it ...?... but still missed. \_\_\_\_\_
10. The problem is only (a, an) ...?...; I won't let such a small thing spoil my day. \_\_\_\_\_

## ••• Exercise 5: Using Words with Multiple Meanings

Each of the Master Words (in bold type) is used differently and has a different meaning from the same word in the passage. For each word, note the part of speech and write your definition of the word as it is used in the sentence. Then write the dictionary definition.

1. Do not **trifle** with my feelings; they may seem like a joke to you, but they are very serious to me.

Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

2. I needed to phone a technical expert to help me **fix** my broken computer.

Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

3. We collected the apple cider in a wooden **barrel** that we rolled to the truck.

Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Left in the heat for too many hours, the eggs became **addled**.

Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

5. She did not hesitate or try to avoid my question; instead, she answered me **point-blank**.

Your Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Dictionary Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

## ••• Exercise 6: Analogies

Determine the relationship between the first pair of words below. Then write the Master Word on the blank that would create a similar relationship with the second pair of words. The types of analogies used are actor/receiver of action, part/whole, noun/related adjective, degree, and synonyms. (See page 158 for a guide to analogy types.)

1. insect : bug :: \_\_\_\_\_ : pest

2. pedal : bicycle :: \_\_\_\_\_ : engine

3. postman : letter :: \_\_\_\_\_ : baby

4. walk : run :: move : \_\_\_\_\_

5. trance : hypnotized :: daze : \_\_\_\_\_